795 of the Lithuanian survivors. *Lithuania is still "the most loyal Daughter of Rome in the North of Europe,"* in the words of the late Pope Pius XI.

661 798 The Russians continue their practice of subjecting the Catholic clergy to periodic and systematic "questioning," accompanied by physical torture and threats. Several priests became apostates. Most of the others were killed in torture chambers or exiled to Siberia, while several dozen priests enlisted with the patriotic guerrillas. Retired emiriti priests were called back to duty—as each priest must now serve 3 to 5 parishes.

874 661 798 One seminary remained for a few years. The number of divinity students was limited to 150. Professors and students were repeatedly summoned to the MVD-MGB and subjected to "pressure" and tortures in order to enlist them as agent-informers. Seminary rectors and their assistants were arrested and exiled as soon as they assumed duties. Students attended classes in churches. They were shadowed and threatened, and their number steadily dwindled as the MVD exercised more "pressure." By 1947, the number of divinity students dropped to 60. Normally 30 to 40 priests die annually of natural causes, but only 7-8 priests were graduated annually to replace the deceased. Finally, during the winter of 1947-48, the seminary was closed.

798 659 661 The surviving priests (about 400 as of the fall of 1948) could discourse on Scriptural texts in their sermons—always mindful that MVD agents were taking down notes and that suspicious Russians in the MVD-MGB offices would summon them to enlarge on translations of the suspect imputed allegories. Attacks on the Church in the official press, over the radio and at mass meetings cannot be answered or discussed: that would be "propaganda." The Stalin constitution warrants freedom of the anti-religious propaganda and of "religious belief,"—not of religious "propaganda."

Priests are continually exposed to provocation. For instance, MVD agents go to "confession" in order to provoke some remark by the priest. Sometimes a priest is summoned "to give last rites to a dying person." When the priest arrives, the "dying person" impersonated by a provocateur becomes a "guerrilla" ("bandit") and the clergyman is arrested "for association with bandits." Priests are forced to disrobe in MVD offices and to be photographed with MVD "girls." Afterward the photographs are circulated among the people. Nevertheless, the faithful are not easily misled by the alien oppressor whom every Lithuanian despises.

In 1947 there was a large scale massacre of the faithful at Kretinga when someone rang the bells of the Franciscan monastery at the time the Russians came to close it. The running people saw Russian troops bringing out the bleeding bayoneted body of a priest. Infuriated, the Lithuanians attacked the Russians with stones and bats. The Russians fired indiscriminately at the mob. . . .

No religious literature—no catechisms, missals, discourses, etc.—is printed: no paper is allotted by the government—and all printing places are state-operated. No priests are permitted to enter hospitals, schools, barracks and prisons to administer the sacraments. The priests enter gaols only as prisoners.

Since 1947, the Russians attacked the Church from another angle—clamoring against the Vatican and demanding creation of a "national Catholic Church."

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Priests were repeatedly summoned and urged to break with "the fascist Vatican"—or be imprisoned for "espionage" and contact with "the Vatican intelligence." In several parishes pastors were arrested and apostate priests installed, without the Bishop's blessing. Bishop's representatives were barred. Local communist officials became ardent and regular "church-goers"—but no one else went there and the Russian venture died a natural death.

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Finally, the Soviet authorities engaged in what may be *the final duel* between the Church and the militant atheism: decrees were published placing all "cultural monuments," viz. church structures, under the supervision of the government. The authorities attempt to impose the so-called *"dvadsatkas"*—committees of 20 members—on each parish to supervise the needs for repairs, pastor's functions, etc. One half of these committeemen are appointed by the government. As to the rest—no specific regulations are disclosed. These "committees" would have the power to dismiss pastors and accept replacements—in effect, they would nullify the episcopal authority and would control every activity of the faithful. To further weaken the opposition, the Bishops were seized and incoming administrators subjected to pressure and deprived of the means of communicatnig with the parishes.

The faithful realize the objective—the clandestine press forewarned them and coupled threats of reprisals against weakening persons together with the explanation of the real meaning of the Russian action. Under such strained conditions, churches go unrepaired rather than enjoy "government assistance" in exchange for acceptance of a *"dvadsatka."* Priests summoned before the MVD refer the officials to the Canonic Law of the Church and direct the Russians to discuss the matter with the Bishops.

A native traitor and atheist, Gailevičius, a former superintendent of NKVD prisons, is presently the "Commissar for Cult Affairs of the Lithuanian SSR." In January 1949 he published a decree in his capacity as custodian of "cultural monuments": churches must not "operate" within 7 kilometers of each other, and if several churches are found within the 7 km. radius, only one church is to be left "operating" and the other churches are to be shut down for use by the state.

In theory, this decree could scarcely affect rural churches. An intolerable situation is arising in cities, however. For instance, there are 17 churches and several chapels in the city of Kaunas. Under this decree, only one church would remain in this city of 150,000 inhabitants, of whom 60% are Lithuanian Catholics. A similar situation is bound to arise in the capital city of Vilnius with its dozens of beautiful churches, or "cultural monuments."

Serious clashes, or rather massacres of women and children, are expected to result during the forcible seizure and closing of the churches to which the foreign invader has no title.

The Italian press recently cited "reliable sources" of January 1949 to the effect that the Russians had confiscated the Cathedral Basilica of Vilnius and converted the edifice into a dance hall. This cannot be verified from Lithuanian sources at this time—but the Gailevičius decree makes this news probable.

668 In the village of M . . . ., several hundred Russians encircled 6 guerrillas. The cornered patriots defended themselves an entire day. Only 3 men survived when their ammunition was exhausted. They managed to crawl toward Russian corpses, and they fought with "borrowed" weapons until all three men were blown out of existence. 60 Russians, including the MVD chief of Prienai, died.

Desecration and Reprisals

661 The behavior of Russian "repression forces" may be illustrated by several examples.

In 1948, a MVD unit called on a farmer in Marijampolė township to make a search. When the door was not opened quickly enough, the Russians fired several series of automatic fire through the door, killing the father. They broke down the door, beat up and raped the widow and her 17-year old daughter, seized everything of value and left. In a neighboring farm, the Russians raped a pregnant woman in her husband's presence, beat up everyone and left. The woman gave birth to a stillborn within a few days.

On 7 February 1947 the MVD troops of Marijampolė saw two German women beggars near the Nendrininkai village. The soldiers opened fire. One woman escaped, the other was raped by 7 men—in the sight of the horrified villagers. The same Russians encountered an elderly German woman beggaring in the Ilgeliškiai village. Learning from her papers that she was German, they killed her with rifle butts and ordered the farmers to bury her.

In Sasnava township, farmer Kukliečius and his son were cutting wood at the forest edge around their farm. Passing Russians shot them on sight, without investigating. They shot farmer Rauba in the Pinkeviškiai village whom they observed chopping wood.

In the village of Naujakaimis, MVD troops killed three youths observed walking together on the street—Valinskas, 17, B. Vylniauskas, 18, and J. Vylniauskas, 16. The Russians bayoneted, kicked and struck the bodies with rifle butts and did not permit the bereaved parents to claim the bodies.

In Kamajai town, Rokiškis county, the Russians descended on a widow who was inadvertently feeding seven strangers who proved to be guerrillas—6 men and a nurse. When the guerrillas refused to surrender, the Russians opened fire. The battle of 7 guerrillas against some 60 Russians lasted several hours. The guerrillas and their hostess were killed. The widow's young daughter fainted from fright and was found among the corpses. The troops ordered the neighbors to load the corpses on a truck. These neighbors seeing the girl was living—told the Russians. The latter ordered them to toss the girl with the corpses. The bodies were brought to Rokiškis and dumped on the city market place. The girl revived. She crawled and started running. Several Russian guards overtook her, passed a noose of barbed wire over her neck, and dragged her back to the corpses—strangled. This scene was witnessed by an American citizen now back in the United States.

668 Thousands of similar incidents are recorded by the underground.

661 When the MVD became too active in Marijampolė county in 1947, a guerrilla was assigned to court an

661 668 MVD employee and he became engaged to her. The engagement party was attended by several dozen top officials, including Chairman of the County Executive Committee, the Prosecutor, the Komsomol Chairman, MVD officials, etc. At an opportune moment, the lone guerrilla liquidated the entire group of Soviet satraps, with the exception of the guest musician. Similar incidents occurred elsewhere, and the Russians now avoid gathering in such groups, unless under strong escort.

Desecration of patriots' corpses continues. Bodies are dumped in market places. Crosses and Lithuanian insignia are cut on the bodies by bayonets and scythes, rosaries "rein" the mouths, eyes are gouged, sexual organs mutilated. Bodies lie in decomposed state for weeks, as the Russians kick and spit on the bodies, dance around them, etc.

Banditry by Russian troops and militia is restrained by the guerrilla units protecting the inhabitants. For over a year Russian bandit gangs of army deserters posed a serious problem but these were eventually destroyed by the guerrillas.

The resistance movement embraces the entire country, although degree of organization differs from place to place. The Russian campaign for a memorial thanking Stalin for the "liberation" failed miserably. Lately, however, to minimize the reprisals, the underground instructed people to report to polling places and to pay lip service to "father of nations," "the great teacher and leader, protector of the working people of the world, Stalin The Sun."

668 Liaison with the underground forces in the neighboring countries is rendered difficult by the extreme nationalism of the Poles and Whiteruthenians. Collaboration is limited to specific objectives, such as assistance for passage of envoys. The underground in Poland is not unified, and there had been cases of betrayal by rival factions. Excellent contact is maintained with the Latvians and Ukrainians. Overtures from "Russian underground sources" were deliberately ignored as too risky—the Russians are so thoroughly cowed by three decades of terror and informer network that no Russian is deemed reliable.

Administration

645 The "boss" of the country is a satrap of the Kremlin—comrade *Shcherbakov*, titled All-Union Communist Party's/bolshevik Plenipotentiary for Lithuania.

In addition to comrade Justas "President" Paleckis, Chairman of the Praesidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Lithuanian SSR, the Council of Ministers is made up of the following nominal heads:

Prime Minister—Mečys Gedvila (Lithuanian);

Deputy Premiers—First Deputy Pisaryov, Second Deputy Sokolov, Third Deputy Mamayev (all 3 Russians);

Council's Secretary—S. Pupeikis (Lithuanian);

Minister of Food Industry—K. Andrijaitis (Lithuanian);

Minister of Local Industry—S. Shkodin (Russian);

Minister of Fishing Industry—Andrei Zasypkin (Russian) was summarily dismissed "for inefficiency" 3 February 1949 and replaced by an unknown, "V. Mickevičius";

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474 Grammar school teachers and library managers were enlisted in the propaganda task. At long last, following a year of propaganda, "in the early spring of 1948, the smallholders Gasparaitis, Daugėla and others from Stungiai village of Žagarė township declared a desire to form an agricultural artel in their village. The initiative on the part of the working peasants was immediately supported by the township and county Party and Soviet organs."

The pattern is very clear. Following a full year of terrorization, *two persons* were finally browbeaten "to take the initiative," that is, to sign on the dotted line in the presence of the armed militiamen who had repeatedly searched their farms, requisitioned "excess supplies," beat up and cursed the farmers. The rest of the "organs" immediately "supported the initiative": 56 families at long last capitulated, rather than go to Siberia, and formed the third kolkhoz in the county. . .

On 18 July, four days before the *Izvestiya* article boasting of landgrants to Lithuanian farmers "FOR ALL TIME," the Moscow radio blared: *"Not a foot of soil must be left in private hands!"*

On 24 July the Vilnius radio seconded: "Individual farms are—hatcheries of kulaks and nationalist bandits," and stressed that "every kolkhoz dweller is deputized by the Communist Party not only to perform his direct duties in the kolkhoz but *assist the Party in controlling the kulak farms* in the neighborhood."

On 9 August the Moscow radio noted that "individual farms, especially in the Baltic republics, were sheltering places for the enemy's agents. . . . It is the supreme duty of the communists of Lithuania to organize kolkhozes and *destroy the centers of bourgeois and Western influence.*"

Resistance to Collectivization

161 *The New York Times* of 25 August 1948 published
474 a dispatch from Paris depicting the paced up drive for collectivization. Greatest resistance was believed to exist in Lithuania.

In its issue of 17 October, the *Times* reported that "a new purge of kulaks" was expected in Lithuania. "Last May Soviet militia rounded up many Lithuanian families, ordered them to sign statements that they were moving to Siberia 'voluntarily,' and then sent them east. They were so-called kulaks."

By 14th December, the entire American press published comments on an article of comrade Trofimov complaining that the Lithuanians were dispatching to Lenin some "Soviet folk." Early in January, the Vilnius radio boasted of the *"liquidation of an insurrection" in Lithuania.*

What were the actual facts? The Russian MVD-MGB forces conducted *three "operations" of genocide* and mass deportations in the spring, autumn and winter. These "operations" were planned and ordered by the Kremlin Politburo, and comrade Gavedov was delegated by comrade Abakumov, State Security Minister of the USSR,to execute the "operations." Nevertheless, some gruesome events facilitated the improvisation of an "insurrection."

In consequence of the pussyfooting of the Allied and IRO officials, some simpleton DPs succumbed to the wiles of the Soviet repatriation missions in Western Germany and returned to Lithuania. Some of

661 them, like the 60-year old farmer J. Kaminskas from Oldenburg, were "detoured" to Siberia. Several other 474 families were forcibly repatriated by the Russians from Pomerania—and were executed by the local authorities when they reached their homes. Having identified the former refugees, the Russians at once retaliated against their relatives. Thus, in Sudavia, Rev. Degutis of Virbalis, Rev. Zdanavičius, Rev. Draadys, township clerk Bieliauskas of Pajevonys, Stasys Aleksa from Jakilkiai, Jonas Micuta from Kunigilkiai were executed. In distant Samagitia, Antanas Ambrozaitis, Antanas Bieliauskas and several other men were exiled to Siberia from Kretinga and their *wives were forced to re-marry*. Similar events have taken place elsewhere.

668 The guerrilla commanders felt obliged to retaliate. 725 On learning that Eugenija Kubiliûtė of Pajevónys had been responsible for some of the Russian-conducted massacres, the guerrillas attacked Pajevonys, found the girl inside the Pajevonys township office, tied her and burned down the structure with the traitor girl inside. The same night the MVD-militia outpost was attacked and destroyed. In the northwest, the guerrillas simultaneously occupied several towns and killed all the communists. Other units invaded the Klaipėda District and seized a Russian arsenal at Šilutė-Heidekrug, including tanks and artillery pieces. Several battalions of the regular Soviet Army sent to combat the guerrillas unexpectedly passed over to the enemy. . . . If there was "insurrection," that was by the regular armed forces of Russia. MVD-MGB troops were moved in and light bombers were summoned to bomb the "bandits" who retreated to the forests. As Russian reinforcements rushed to Pajevonys, a Russian munitions dump exploded. . . .

Then followed the "operation" of May 1948.

Genocide in Operation

474 Rural authorities were instructed to urge the dis-
661 possessed farmers to file applications for land allotments. Of course, none of these instructions were printed in the press. Local officials were instructed to stress that the Soviet regime wanted to endow everyone with land. When petitions were turned in, the officials informed the petitioners that land was allotted to them "in another township" and they must report to certain transportation points. When the farmers and their families, bearing their few worldly possessions arrived at the appointed places, they were encircled by MVD troops, driven to railroad depots and placed on board freight cars bound for Siberia. Conservative estimates placed the number of people deported in this despicable manner at more than 100,000.

Letters began arriving from the deportees telling about the numerous deaths while in transit. People trembled as they listened to threats made by countless agitators. Agricultural work was done listlessly. Fields were neglected. More and more failures to meet taxes and grain delivery quotas were reported in the press, announcing "temporary exile into friendly republics" of the "kulak saboteurs." People became resigned and agreed to go into kolkhozes.

668 The Lithuanian is passionately fond of his soil. How could he leave all his precious belongings and animals to the profane Russians to debase? No: he would rather burn down everything. . . .

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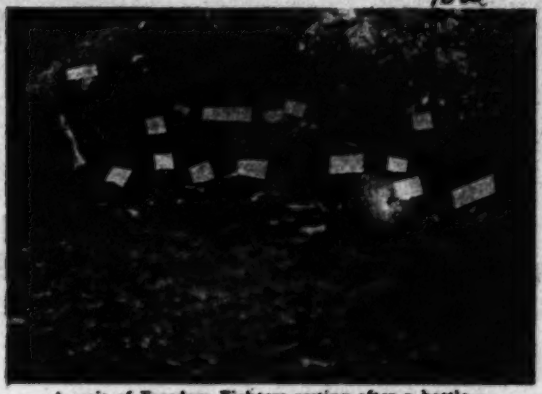

A unit of Freedom Fighters resting after a battle—Tauras Area, Lithuania.

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These practices meant "sabotage of a people's economy" and "insurrection." Reproached and heckled in this manner, some people broke down and could no longer stand the tirades and the violence. They seized their pitchforks, axes and scythes and turned on the hated Muscovites. Countless people were murdered. Ablebodied men fled to the forests.

All this time, the Russians were perfecting their preparations to execute the "Abakumov Order" to purge the Baltic States of all hostile element (see the Nov.-Dec. 1948 issue of the *Lithuanian Bulletin*, pp. 4-5). The indignation and desperation of the farmers offered a very convenient excuse for MVD-MGB troops to descend en masse in November and December 1948 in execution of a previously conceived plan of the Kremlin Politburo. After all, the agitators had very definite instructions: rave for hours—and some people's enemies are likely to betray themselves/ . . .

No one knows the manpower losses of the "operation" of the present winter. First reports placed the casualties at 60,000 men, women and children. But the Russians claimed that the "insurrection" was put down only in January 1949, and the "Russian system" entails retaliation against the families and friends of the "people's enemies." This means that the persecution is endless. . . .

However, the crime of genocide perpetrated by the Russians against Catholic Lithuania does not end with simple murder on the ground of a provoked "sabotage" and "insurrection." Genocide takes other forms.

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One of the refined forms of genocide is reported in the Party organ *Tiesa* of 13 December 1948:

"A serial call of the youths to the FGA (Factory Production Training) schools of Vilnius, Kaunas and Klaipėda began on 10 November. The call-up will last until 15 December 1948. One thousand youths will be called to learn mass construction skills. During the years 1945-48 about 14,000 young skilled workers entered industrial and construction concerns from the trades, railroad and FGA schools."

Graduates of such specialized schools may be sent anywhere in the Soviet Union, to "assist the fraternal republics" needing specified skilled labor groups. They have no choice—they must go where they are directed, and there is unlimited demand for skilled labor in the Asiatic "fraternal republics." Their eventual return to their homeland is doubtful.

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"Master race" gangsters—Russian MGB "istrebiteli" troops (a photograph "borrowed" by the guerrillas).

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This is a diabolical method to take the youths from their homeland and to separate them permanently from their own people, thus depriving Lithuania of a natural growth of its people. This method entails *double genocide*—the destruction of a *national* and *religious* minority. There is but one lone Catholic church in Russia—in Moscow, for foreigners. The Lithuanian Catholic youths of school age are doomed to live among heathen Russians and Asiatics, far from the influence of the Catholic Church. . . .

Few young people are seen in Lithuania. They are either drafted into the Soviet armed forces and labor battalions, or are working in Russia as skilled workers, or are with the guerrillas in the forests. Natural family life and procreation are made impossible. The Lithuanian People as a nation is being starved, crucified and wiped out by the Soviet aggressor whom Lithuania had considered a friend during the years 1920-1940.

Death March

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A guerrilla officer vividly described his impressions of viewing a column of the deportees in Vilnius.

"As the last rays of the sun were growing longer, just like our sufferings under the increasing oppression, my hopeless eyes gazed into the street.

"Suddenly, armed soldiers with fixed bayonets turned the corner and chased people off the street. A long column of men was approaching—an ordinary sight these days, the third one I had seen that week.

"Two days earlier, a woman fell into a manhole in her flight when MVD soldiers were chasing the people off the street. She clung to the manhole's edge. The soldiers stopped the column, pulled the woman to the street and mercilessly clubbed and kicked her—I can still hear her cries. . . .

"Two weeks earlier, the 15-year old son of my neighbor was marched past this house. I watched Juozukas passing his home. The boy raised his hand and shouted: "The regime of bandits will eventually come to an end! I shall return, my dear parents, do not fear!"—But a rifle butt was already descending on his shoulders. . . .

"The column came nearer. I strained my eyes to see if I knew anyone.

"Yes—there was my former professor of Lituanistics. A tall man, his head held high, hatless. Doubtless, he carried his hat in hand to be recognized easier. . . .

2:Anonymous U-4(no date)1947 RB5 Lithuanians RB5

tactics in combatting religion.

Soviet Methods

Dr. Ladas Natkevičius, the late Lithuanian Minister to the Kremlin, was asked by Stalin in 1939, during the so-called "negotiations for a Mutual Assistance Pact," how great was the influence of the clergy in Lithuania. When he was told that the clergy of all Christian denominations enjoy great authority among the faithful, the Generalissimo thoughtfully remarked —"That is *very important to know.*"

At the time the remark passed unnoticed. A Soviet invasion was not anticipated because of the frequently professed Soviet friendship for Lithuania and Lithuania's excellent record in discharging all treaty obligations.

But the significance of this remark was quite apparent when Justas Paleckis, the puppet "president of Soviet Lithuania," bade farewell to Dr. Hildebrandt, a noted German newspaperman. Paleckis told the departing German quite frankly that he had received instructions from the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. to apply no *direct* pressure on the clergy.

The Soviet regime always fought religion and its institutions, but its tactical methods were different during both occupations.

The First Occupation—Oppression at Full Tempo

Immediately after the first total occupation of the Baltic States in June 1940, uniform steps were applied by the three satraps of the Kremlin dispatched to liquidate the sovereign Republics: Vice-Commissar for Foreign Affairs Dekanozov in Lithuania, Deputy-Commissar for Foreign Affairs Vyshynsky in Latvia and Politbureau member Zhdanov in Estonia. The Concordats with the Vatican were abruptly and unilaterally broken off and the Papal Nunzios were expelled.

Then followed the elimination of religion from public life. The Catholic and Protestant Theology-Philosophy Faculties of the University of Lithuania at Kaunas were closed; all Catholic cultural, educational and social welfare organizations, newspapers and publishing concerns were abolished and their properties confiscated; teaching of religion was eliminated from schools; army, school, hospital and prison chaplains were summarily dismissed; crucifixes and other religious insignia were removed from schools, courts and public places and desecrated.

Then came the application of the nationalization decree: buildings, landholdings, workshops, libraries, private hospitals and schools, orphanages, kindergar-

[423] tens and personal property owned by institutions and organizations of a religious character were sequestered. 798 In nationalizing land, parishes were given only 3 hectares—although other landlords retained 30 hectares. 661 Buildings owned by parishes and bishoprics, including episcopal residences and seminaries, libraries, printing shops, printed stocks of books were confiscated. Denominational grammar schools, high schools, orphanages, kindergartens and hospitals were converted into state institutions. The stocks of missals, hymnals, prayer-books, rosaries, religious pictures, and other religious articles found stored in book shops and retail stores were desecrated or destroyed.

793 The Soviets considered the clergy a separate "caste," 651 antagonistic to the proletariat and, therefore, to be 661 eliminated. The clergy as well as independent farmers (called '*kulaks*'), were oppressed economically; priests and "cult servants" were heavily taxed. For instance, a tolerated "proletarian" with a monthly income of 200 rubles paid 30 rubles monthly for living space assigned to him, while "cult servants" of the same income class paid 220 rubles monthly, and those with incomes of 350 rubles paid 388 rubles.

651 The Communist Party proposed to levy excessive 665 license fees on churches, similar to motion picture 661 house and cabaret assessments. The taxes depended on the size of the church. Such taxes were already imposed in the sections of Poland annexed to Russia—20,000 to 50,000 rubles. A commissar explained the policy to a pastor of a Lithuanian parish in eastern Lithuania which was annexed by Russia in 1939: "If you can't pay—close down your shop." Consequently, the churches were to be closed by degrees for nonpayment of taxes.

798 The Party also passed a decision to convert the cen- 665 trally located Garrison Church of Kaunas into a "Rev- 661 olutionary Museum." The Museum of Church Art was liquidated and its exhibits, the antique vestments, were used by Red Army troopers to polish their boots.

All that was public anti-religious action. The other phase, shrouded in secrecy, was directed against individual members of the clergy.

The Party instructed its agents to disrupt the internal discipline of churchmen, to enlist agent-informers among the clergymen, to antagonize priests against each other or to compromise them. NKGB Major Gladkov issued a secret directive dated 21 October 1940, directed to all county security chiefs, to institute unbroken surveillance of priests, church employees, friars and nuns, and to enlist students of upper classes for espionage on the private lives of the clergymen. "Remember that some of the priests are not provided for materially and are wavering in their ideological outlook." The secret order of 21 January 1941 directed particular attention to individual discontent and antagonism among members of religious organizations: advantage should be taken of such incidents to disrupt the organizations.

793 After digesting the reports of weakness exhibited by 657 some individual priests, People's Commissar of Jus- 661 tice, Pranas Pakarklis, a native traitor, offered attractive offices to a number of priests, on condition that

they discontinue holding Mass and stop the performance of other priestly duties. A number of priests were arrested and the NKVD attempted to enlist their services by threats and blackmail. Because of these methods, several priests consented—and, immediately after their release, fled abroad. Those refusing to become agents were imprisoned. Soon the number of prisoners grew as many friars, preachers and high school students heroically defended their faith.

The Russians initiated a campaign against religious *traditions*. They began by banning the traditional Corpus Christi processions in the streets. All Saints Day was declared to be a working day, and the authorities banned traditional services and mass visits to cemeteries on All Souls' Day. During Advent and Lent, the bolsheviks encouraged dancing, entertainment and anti-religious lectures. Good Friday and Holy Saturday, as well as the second day of Easter, were designated working days. Those failing to report for work on the second day of Easter were prosecuted. In general, at frequent intervals, ordinary Sundays were periodically declared to be working days, and Saturdays—days of rest.

The teaching of religion in schools was replaced by classes on biology and the Stalin constitution. Biological lectures popularized "Darwinism." The "science of constitution" was to popularize a "Soviet democracy" and its oft-varying shifts directed by party line. In place of religious sodalities and athletic groups, the bolsheviks attempted to form *"Komsomol"* (Communist Youth) nests directed by political instructors called "Komsorg." Religious sermons were replaced by anti-religious tirades in the communist-controlled press and at mass meetings. Attendance at such mass-meetings to hear blasphemies was made compulsory.

Churches kept open and functioning. However, attendants at religious services were terrorized. The Party posted uniformed and non-uniformed spies at church doors to observe and list the churchgoers. Attendance in church was a sufficient reason for dismissal from higher offices.

The anti-religious drive, growing in tempo, began to expand. When Bishops Brizgys and Ramanauskas called on Pozdniakov, the former Soviet Minister to Lithuania and at present the Kremlin's deputy satrap, to ask for the return of the premises of the Theological Seminary, the Russian attempted to "reason" with them. Pozdniakov stated that they should have no illusions: what had been accomplished in Russia in 20 years, will be achieved in Lithuania within two to three years by experienced administrators. Why should the Seminary "delude" young men? By the time they became priests, there would be no duties to perform—in Russia the priests already have nothing to do. . . .

Lithuanian Resistance to the Anti-Religious Drive

The Lithuanians had suffered much for religion—murder, imprisonment and exile to Siberia—during

the Tsarist Russian occupation. True to tradition, *resistance* against the anti-religious drive developed into a spontaneous and united movement. The defense of religion embraced even persons who had formerly neglected the church and seemed to be indifferent.

Churches were filled to capacity. A former female communist stated that the church was the only place where one could relax physically, without having to listen to the maddening bolshevik agitation.

Mass singing in churches became a new and precious experience—a plea for help from a persecuted and dying people.

On All Souls' night, the cemeteries were filled with people. The Lithuanians followed their ancient tradition, they paid respect to their dead without priests, regardless of the fury of the Party Militia which arrested many in their mad rage.

On Sundays, declared to be working days, everyone, including civil servants and school children, went to church, knowing full well the penalty. In Prienai, students reporting to school on All Souls' Day found a scribbled message tacked on the door: "Stalin's constitution grants freedom of conscience, therefore believers need not attend classes"—so all the students went to church. Numerous arrests and dismissals from school followed.

Public prayers were a custom during the school year. Now, just as soon as the teachers left the classrooms, they were again recited.

The bishops did not dismiss former chaplains from their duties. Unable to teach the doctrines of the Church in schools, the chaplains transferred their pastoral activities, after classes, into churches and sacristies. The chaplain of Alytus organized a Retreat on Good Friday. To prevent attendance, the Communist Party ordered the faculty of the school to organize an anti-religious lecture on that date and ordered all students to attend the mass-meeting. The teachers and a few pupils showed up. A teacher related afterward: "A little girl sat in front of me during the harrangue reading a booklet in her lap. I was curious and looked over her shoulder. It was the national religious classic of Lent songs—*Graudûs Verksmai.*"

The ecclesiastic authorities did not dismiss the students of the seminaries. As some students dispersed, new idealists replaced them. Divinity students lived privately and attended lectures in churches, sacristies and private quarters. The NKVD made preparations to foreclose all private religious instruction, but the war intervened.

The first Russian occupation lasted one year. Pozdniakov's prophecy of the Soviet regime achieving within a two-three year period the results gained by the anti-religious campaign in Russia during 20 years, did not materialize, because of the spontaneous and determined resistance.

However, a heavy blow was delivered to religious life in Lithuania during the one year: 10% of the priests were eliminated, forcibly separated from their people. Of these, 15 priests were brutally tortured and murdered, 9 were exiled to Siberia. The majority

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of laymen active in Catholic Action were either murdered or exiled to Siberia. 40,000 Lithuanians were deported to Russia during that one lone year, and at least two-thirds of the number were Catholic Action members.

The Second Russian Occupation

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As far back as 1942, Comrade Vyshynsky, Deputy Commissar of Foreign Affairs and Liquidator of the Democratic Latvian State, admitted to a foreign statesman that bolshevik tactics in the Baltic States were based on an erroneous policy: the method of violence and compulsion had been a mistake.

In July 1944, the Russians again invaded the Baltic States. However, there was no change in their policy or methods regarding religion: they permitted no Catholic organizations, press or instruction of religion in schools.

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The Salesian monastery at Skirsnemunė was encircled by the Red Army and all physically able friars were drafted into the Red Army.

Soon thereafter, the tactics regarding the clergy wavered. Soviet overlords attempted to maintain, to some extent, the propaganda thesis regarding the alleged existence of "freedom of religion" in the Soviet
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Union. Only one Catholic Seminary, of the former four, was left in Lithuania, but divinity students, as other university students, were exempt from military duty. The number of divinity students was sharply limited to 150—for a Catholic nation of three million —instead of the previous 850.

This measure represented a lull in the anti-religious drive: religion was to be eliminated by other means, by mass deportations of the faithful and their replacement by Communist Russians, so that, in the words of comrade Pozdniakov, the priests would find no employment for their vocation, no audience to listen to them. By effecting the primary aim of the Soviet regime—the liquidation of the Lithuanian people—the secondary aim, that of abolishing religion, would be simultaneously achieved. This explains the change in tactics, not the basic aim.

Furthermore, the new "party line" sought not merely to leave the clergy untouched, but to use them for political interests of bolshevism, as is done in Russia with the Orthodox clergy. In 1946 the NKVD encountered great difficulty with armed Lithuanian guerrilla operations. The NKVD decided to use the bishops and clergy to break the fighters' will to wage war. The Ministry of Interior (NKVD-MVD) demanded that the bishops publish pastoral letters and in sermons condemn the armed resistance and urge an end to it.

The alien regime attempted to attain two purposes: to enlist the clergy's aid to further its plans, and to drive a wedge between the clergy and the fighting nation. However, the plan was too obviously underlined with "red" threads, and the bishops declined to do the NKVD bidding. When the NKVD threatened with repressions, one bishop frankly told the satraps: "It is all the same to me whether I live five more years or less—I shall not soil the authority of the Church."

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The Anti-Religious Drive Intensified

When the Church hierarchy refused to be drawn to the "party line," Russian tactics once more underwent a change and returned to the policy of outright oppression.

Half of the surviving bishops of Lithuania were arrested: Bishop Borisevičius of Telliai, his Suffragan Bishop Ramanauskas, and Bishop Theophilius Matulionis of Kaišiadorys. The latter suffered his second martyrdom at the hands of the Russians: previously he had spent 12 years in Russian dungeons and slave labor camps until, in 1933, he was exchanged for a Soviet spy sentenced in Lithuania for subversive activities.

There are two versions regarding the fate of Bishop Borisevičius. Officially, he was sentenced to death. However, repatriated German prisoners of war state that they saw the bishop in a slave labor gang cutting timber in the Far East, together with several other Lithuanian Monsignori and priests.

The aged bishop of Vilkavilkis, Antanas Karosas, is now living in Marijampolė, retired from active duties. Archbishop Karevičius died soon after the second Russian invasion. Archbishop Romuald Jałbrzykowski of Vilnius was repatriated to Poland to administer the sections of the Vilnius Archbishopric left in a reduced Poland. Archbishop Skvireckas, Metropolitan of Lithuania, together with Bishop Brizgys of Kaunas and Co-Adjutor Bishop Podoľskis of Vilkavilkis, are in exile in Western Europe. Bishop Mečys Reinys of Vilnius, according to a *Tass* bulletin, is said to be alive in Vilnius. There is no information whatsoever regarding Bishop Paltarokas of Panevėrys. Mgr. Juodaitis is administering the Bishopric of Telliai.

If Bishop Paltarokas is still living, only two bishops remain in Lithuania—20% of the pre-war hierarchy. Of course, this does not prevent *Tass* from claiming that "The Catholic Church organization has remained unchanged. . . ."

During the latter part of 1946, the Soviet press vilely attacked the Catholic Church and the clergy. Lithuanian priests were accused of supporting the guerrillas—"political bandits" and "Lithuanian-German nationalists." The NKVD instituted numerous prosecution processes against priests and gave the widest publicity to the charges. Priests were sentenced to 10 years in hard labor prisons and deported to Russia.

The terror, by the end of the year 1946, was greater than during the first occupation: 25 priests were murdered, 40 were sentenced to hard labor and deported, 150 priests are in hiding.

Through murders, imprisonment, deportations and exile, Lithuania has lost the services of at least 350 priests—that is, 22% of all priests in the country in 1940.

Bishop Ramanauskas of Telliai went to the NKVD in Vilnius to inquire about the fate of his superior, Bishop Borisevičius. He was told that the Bishop was sentenced to death. He returned to Telliai. He was arrested by the NKVD immediately after hold-

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793 ing Holy Mass. With his hands tied behind his back, he was pushed into an auto, driven to the railroad
651 station, and placed on board a train.
798 Bishop Matulionis was arrested in mid-December 1946. The old martyr bore himself with dignity and firmness. To warnings by well-wishers he replied: "I know the bolsheviks." He had ordained some divinity graduates December 9 and 12th, and appeared very weak. He was arrested a few days later for having issued a pastoral letter warning against the wiles of Komsomol.

Arrests of the clergy are more numerous after several visits to "Prime Minister" Gedvila to protest against limiting the number of divinity students to 150. The seminary's building is being requisitioned: its quarters in Marian Fathers' Charity Church are being turned over to Nurses School.

A favorite Russian method is to promote dissension. When Rev. Nagulevičius, pastor of Obeliai, was arrested, the NKDV lodged a suspended priest in the rectory. This "pastor" refused to admit the priest appointed by the bishop. The Chancellor of the diocese arrived to settle the matter, but the NKVD "pastor" refused to obey. When the Chancellor visited comrade Gailevičius, Adviser on Cult Affairs in Vilnius, the latter said: "At present the people rule. This is apparently the people's will, and we cannot help in this matter."

The NKVD is attempting to install its own "priests" and, eventually, to have a Church administration subservient to the NKVD. Thus far, only one apostate is known.

No priests are admitted to the Klaipėda-Memel District.

[794] Congregations are being evicted from their quarters although, officially, the monasteries are not banned. St. Casimir's Sisters are still in possession at Pažaislis, and the Franciscan Fathers are still left in Kretinga.

[651] Priests and Church property are heavily taxed. For instance, the Cathedral of Kaunas must pay 46,000 rubles, the Cathedral of Panevėžys 40,000, the small Church of St. Nicholas in Vilnius dating back to the 14th century, is taxed 16,000 rubles. The late Mgr. Jokubauskas, administrator of the Bishopric of Kaunas who died in February 1947, was taxed 20,000 rubles. The figures become significant when it is realized that an average laborer earns 200 rubles a month.

Sidelights of Anti-Religious Drive

659 Religious practice is permitted inside the church
626 only: Stalin's constitution grants "freedom of belief"
798 and warrants the liberty of anti-religious propaganda. No religious texts, not even prayerbooks, are permitted to be published—"paper shortage" . . . On the other hand millions of vile pamphlets are printed.

Once more, uniformed sentinels and agents in mufti are ostentatiously posted at church doors. They look
[558] over every face and scribble notes in the "blocnotes." Attendance in church means dismissal from a responsible post in the government. Teachers attending religious services are denounced in the press as "persons of low morality." A high school director inquired of

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Among the young Lithuanian intelligentsia there arose very quickly a differentiation between those who obtained a religious education and those who turned to the secular sciences. Both groups, however, found themselves together in the cultural battle which was now breaking out against * the Russification plans of the Czarist government. 538 Then /230/ the latter took a step which had never 661 happened before in the history of peoples by proclaiming, on August 6, 1865, that six governments of western Russia were forbidden to print writings in Latin letters. If this decree, which was not repealed until April 24, 1904, was aimed above all at the Polish literature, it also had at first the effect of a death blow on the further development of the young Lithuanian literature. It soon became evident that it was impossible to use the Russian alphabet for the Lithuanian language, and thus this prohibition was equivalent to a prohibition of all Lithuanian literature, including the religious, which tended to arouse special bitterness in this Roman-Catholic country. In order completely to paralyze the development of a Lithuanian educated class and therewith the awakening of an independent national consciousness, there followed a second prohibition according to which Lithuanians in their home provinces could not obtain any posts in the Russian government service. Thus the lay intelligentsia which was now arising, insofar as it turned to government service, was removed into the interior of Russia. A knowledge of these circumstances is a basic condition for the understanding of the further development of Lithuanian literature, for it is now clear why the further intellectual and literary development was carried forward from now on by forces that started their activities outside the political borders of the country. In addition it explains why, in this struggle for existence, whose center of gravity lay from now on on the

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•661 purely political side, the literary and artistic element had to recede far into the background.

Bishop Valančius originated the idea of printing Lithuanian books in Tilsit and then having them secretly brought across the border. [214] These books carried Vilna as their place of publication, and as date of publication any year prior to the proclamation of the prohibition. In the course of time it was possible /231/ to cover the whole country with a network of so-called "book carriers" or "book bringers" (Lithuanian: knygnešys), who secretly smuggled the books across the border and distributed them within the country, although they were threatened with prison, even death, and deportation to Siberia. The Russians set a price of 500 rubles on the head of the book carrier Bielakas in 1890. Even the clergy was not spared, a number of priests were banished to Siberia, and a trial hung over Bishop Valančius himself in 1870-71. (31)

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31. A good insight into this period is given by the comprehensive two-volume collection by P. Ruseckas, Knygnešys (The Book Bringers), Vol. I (Kaunas, 1926); Vol. II (1928); it contains numerous recollections and accounts of these men themselves, along with copious references. Otherwise, too, this period in Lithuanian literature has been fre-

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∞∞ Although in the decade from 1864-73 no less than 814, and from 1874-83 even 270 Lithuanian books and articles (principally religious in nature) were printed and distributed,(32) the year

32. Figures of the Lighuanian bibliographer Baltromaitis.